NAQCC News

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1. SPRINT: Our sprint is this Tuesday evening, August 12th at 8:30-10:30 PM EDT (Wednesday 0030-0230Z).

This month's special award was suggested by Paul N8XMS. It is for using a vintage (pre-1939) straight key. The SA will be awarded by drawing among the top scorers from each of our sprint divisions who use such a key.

There are also the other usual prizes and certificates topped off by our monthly giveaway of a CW book on CD donated by Chuck K7QO. Chuck is currently giving away one CD to the high scorer who hasn't won a CD before. As with the special award, the CD is awarded in a drawing among the top qualifiers from each of our sprint divisions. There is now a list of all the current CD's available in the General Sprint Rules. Club officers are not eligible for the CD's.

Our autologger has speeded up reporting of results so much we have now changed our log submission deadline. The deadline from now on will be 2400Z on the Sunday following the sprint. The log must be RECEIVED by that time. We may make allowances for regular mail entries if they have been postmarked early enough but may have been delayed in the mail system.

If you're entering one of our sprints for the first time, we welcome you and hope you will be a regular participant from now on.

Remember this is only a brief overview of the coming sprint. Be sure to always read and understand the full general sprint rules and any specific rules for the current month's sprint.

Complete sprint results and rules always can be found here.

2. JULY CHALLENGES RESULTS: Randy KB4QQJ's poker challenge turned out to be very popular. We had many favorable comments on it, both privately and in the soapbox. We most certainly will re-run this one at a later date. We will adjust the points value for each hand for the next running based on how many of each hand were made this time. The odds of making hands with call sign prefixes definitely varied from the odds of making hands with a regular deck of playing cards.

There are still two full days left before the results are final, but so far we've had 11 reports submitted with K3WWP and N1LU leading the way to get the two certificates we are awarding to the two top scorers.

Full challenge info and final results (after August 10th) including my tutorial/work sheet for our alphabet style challenges here.

3. OPERATING TIPS: Every once in a while a writer gets bored or gets into a devilish mood or for some other reason he puts a bit of mis-information in his writing just to see if anyone will notice and mention it to the writer. I'm afraid I plead guilty to doing that in our last newsletter. I said 73 meant 'Best wishes' instead of 'Best regards', and hey, someone did notice and mention it. Thanks Don W4DON. You're a good observer. Don also thought I should have mentioned that Q signals are only for use on CW, not phone. I thought that was just too overly obvious to mention, but maybe I was wrong, so I've now mentioned it.

OK enough fooling around. Let's get down to tips now with the reminder that Ron K5DUZ and Karl N3IJR should be starting up the NAQCC Elmer project before too much longer. I'm looking forward to what they have to offer to newcomers.

Many members seem to be finding our sprints a good way to get some contest training, so let's talk about the proper (or best) way to operate our sprint. These tips also apply equally well to other contesting as well.

The key word in contests is BREVITY. You don't have to send at 40-45 WPM to be brief. Those just starting in contests sending maybe 10 WPM or less can be brief equally well. The briefer you are, obviously the more time you have to make contacts. If you can complete a contact in 15 seconds, based strictly on time consumed, you can make 4 times as many contacts as someone who takes a full minute to complete a contact.

Therefore, keep everything short. Look at the following example of a complete exchange between K3WWP and WY3H. The blue text is what is sent by each station.

K3WWP - CQ NA K3WWP
WY3H - WY3H
K3WWP - WY3H 569 PA 2
WY3H - TU 599 PA 1
K3WWP - TU CQ NA K3WWP and so on

The very minimum of info. The TU's (Thank yoU) are not necessary but I personally believe in being polite in contests no matter how frantic they are. Let's look at each exchange briefly.

The CQ is simply CQ NA K3WWP with a pause to listen for about 5 seconds for a response. If no one answers, you call again and keep that pattern until you do get an answer.

To answer a CQ all you do is send your call (WY3H), nothing more.

K3WWP then sends WY3H's call so he knows who K3WWP answered and then sends his info 569 (RST) PA (SPC) 2 (NAQCC NR)

WY3H says thanks and sends his info 599 PA 1

K3WWP says thanks and continues his CQing til the next answer. Even at 10 WPM the full exchange probably takes only 30-40 seconds or so.

Learn that procedure and you'll be set for even the biggest contests since that is how they are done also.

More tips can be found on the web site here.

4. GENERAL CLUB NEWS: - The big news this week is our wonderfully successful recruitment drive. Paul KD2MX wrote an excellent recruitment letter and Dave VA3RJ emailed it to virtually every email list and other sources that have an interest in QRP and/or CW. As a result we added 115 (so far) new members in a two day period. The drive was done in an effort to reach those hams who have an interest in CW/QRP, but for one reason or other never found out about the NAQCC until now. It was also done to recruit those hams who may have gotten the wrong impression that our club is only for dedicated QRP/CW operators. The fact is that we welcome anyone who has even the slightest interest in CW and/or QRP. They must understand however that all club activities are designed for QRP/CW. We do not have any QRO events, nor events for any other mode but CW. Of course as stated in our sprint rules since the beginning, anyone may enter at any power level, but they are not eligible for any awards or certificates if they operate more than 5 watts output. Also we want the QRO operators to be considerate of the QRP ops if they do enter our sprints. One very strong QRO station can create havoc amongst a group of QRP stations trying to work each other.

- HELP WANTED - As a result of our recruitment drive, we've gone over the 2500 member mark. That means we need another member to help out in emailing our newsletter notifications. We've had a couple members mention in the past they were interested in helping out, but have not responded to a recent email. Briefly the job involves making a mass emailing twice each month on a Friday evening before our sprint and on the last Friday evening of a month to announce that our latest on-line newsletter is now available. There is an excellent FREE program called PIMEX that does mass mailings simply and effortlessly. Even with a slow internet connection, it can send out up to 500 messages in less than an hour. Dave VA3RJ does his mailing with a dial-up connection in probably less than a half hour. In addition to the actual emailing you would be responsible for keeping your portion of the member file up to date as you are sent new members or updated info for the members you already have. Your job would be to handle the member numbers from 2501-3000, then we'll find another mailer. The job involves probably only about 4-5 hours or less of work each month. If that sounds like something you can handle and would like to do to help out the club, simply email **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET** to sign up or to ask any questions before you sign up. It will be first come, first served, so don't wait.

- One of our emailers Rick AA4W says that some of our email newsletters are rejected for one reason or other. Also some of our regular club email. If your email program or your ISP has (or will have) an email filter, please be sure to set it up so all the email addresses on the Contact Us page are on your 'white' or 'OK' list if you wish to receive club emails.

- We have a finished version of our email stationery so that you may proudly show that you are a member of the NAQCC when you send a ham radio related email. If you are interested (and I hope you are), just email **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET** and let us know. Be sure to tell us what email program you use to send your emails (Windows Live Email, Outlook, Outlook Express, etc.) It will work with all of those three email programs, and possibly others as well. It will not work as is with Incredimail. That program uses a proprietary format that we can't recreate. We'll email you the stationery and instructions on how to install and use it. Here's what it looks like.

- For the past few months our members have been very forthcoming with their pictures for our gallery and/or featured members page. However shyness seems to have set in again and our inflow of pictures has dwindled to almost nothing lately. C'mon now, let's hear from you bashful folks. Send us your picture and join the 86 already in our gallery. Just email us a .jpg photo of yourself. We'll crop your face out of a larger photo as long as the face portion is at least 120 pixels square or larger. Large photos reduce in size nicely, but smaller ones don't always enlarge clearly. If you wish to be a feature member, send us a brief bio of your ham radio activity along with a photo or photos of yourself and your equipment. Looking forward to processing your picture soon.

4a. N3A UPDATE: - Thanks to those who have signed up to be N3A ops so far. Our special event call has now been approved and we're ready to go in October. We still need ops from the following call areas though: 2, 5, 6, 8. Here's who we have as ops so far:

N3A/1 - W1OH (MA), K1YAN (MA)
N3A/2 -
N3A/3 - WY3H (PA), K3WWP (PA), AF3Z (PA), AE3J (DE)
N3A/4 - K4UK (VA)
N3A/5 -
N3A/6 -
N3A/7 - KH6OZ (MT)
N3A/8 -
N3A/9 - K9JWI (IN), AI4AW (WI)
N3A/0 - AB0TX (KS)

I'm a bit disappointed that only WY3H and K3WWP have signed up among those who operated N3A last year. We hope to hear from more of you who said you had so much fun last October and did such a great job then. How about it?

5. CW CARTOON OF THE MONTH: Let's take a comedy break now courtesy of Dick Sylvan W9CBT. Dick has been a long-time QRP/CW operator. One of his many talents is being a cartoon artist, and he is supplying a cartoon each month for the newsletter. The NAQCC is very honored to be one of just two organizations to feature Dick's cartoons. In addition to our newsletter, Dick's cartoons appear monthly in The K9YA Telegraph, an on-line only Ham Radio E-zine where he is the staff cartoonist. Dick has also authored a book entitled "Hi Hi - A Collection of Ham Radio Cartoons" available via his web site at http://www.k9ya.org/w9cbt/. A new cartoon will be appearing in each of our even-numbered newsletters.

6. MEMBER NEWS: Send your news items to our news editor Paul KD2MX at **KD2MX@ARRL.NET**. Tell us what you are doing with your CW/QRP setup, and fill out your story with some photos. That's what we want to see in this section. The only qualification is that it should deal with CW/QRP and not other modes. Your fellow members love to know what you have been up to using this wonderful mode.

- **From Jesse AB0SR #1553 -** This is my latest project. I want to see how long I can run on Battery power at QRP levels. I am using three gell cell batteries that have been charged only once each and will not be charged again during the project. The batteries are two 50AH and one 73AH cells. I started on July 3rd and have only run QRP on wire antennas here and have about 50 contacts so far. I wonder how many I can get off these batteries. The rig is an Elecraft K2 as can be seen in the picture. So wish me luck and I hope to chat with a lot of you on the

air soon.

- **From Bill K6MGO #259 -** After reading about the New England Scaf filter in the WorldRadio QRP column, I ordered one. When I completed it, I first checked it out on my FT-857, which has DSP, and so, I was not terribly impressed although I did notice a slight reduction in noise. Then, I put it on the FT-817, and that made a big difference in the reception as the 817 doesn't have DSP. I can recommend it for cw work. I even tried it out on SSB and you can hear a decrease in noise with that mode. So, all in all, this is a good accessory for your QRP (or QRO) station

- **From John K3WWP #0002 -** I'm still having fun on the magic band 6 meters. I'm now up to 12 states and 17 grid squares worked. I've finished the permanent mount for the 6 meter rotatable dipole in my attic. That replaces the temporary mount I showed in the last newsletter. If you haven't tried this band, you should. It's a lot of frantic fun when the not all that frequent openings come along.

The publication of our next newsletter will be announced via email to all members for whom we have a valid email address unless they specifically have unsubscribed from the email.

Unless otherwise credited, all items are written by K3WWP.

If you came directly to this newsletter, we invite you now to browse the NAQCC Web Site.